

Murray River at Yunderup, my wife and I saw a handsome lutino Silvereye. The plumage was a creamy yellow with some darker feathers on the wings and the head. It was very conspicuous among its fellows dodging about in the foliage of the *Melaleucas* overhanging the water.

—C. C. SPORN, Mandurah.

The Australian Pratincole near the Western Australian Border.—Serventy and Whittell (*Birds of Western Australia*, 1951) do not record the Australian Pratincole (*Stiltia isabella*) in Western Australia south of the Kimberley Division, though it ranges over a large part of Eastern Australia. In South Australia it is known as far west as Ooldea and Streaky Bay. On February 4, 1957, however, I observed three birds close to the border, at the aerodrome at Koonalda in South Australia. The birds were not nervous and allowed an approach to within 50 yards. Since Koonalda is approximately 60 miles east of the state border it is not unlikely that Australian Pratincoles will be recorded eventually in the southern parts of this State.

—V. N. SERVENTY, Nedlands.

Diamond Dove at Dryandra.—Serventy and Whittell (*Handbook*, 1951, p. 74) state of the Diamond Dove (*Geopelia cuneata*) that it is not a regular inhabitant of the South-West but occasionally irrupts into this region. In the last few years there have been several published records for the South-West (see *W. Aust. Nat.*, 6: 24, and *Emu*, 57: 11). On Oct. 25, 1956, two Diamond Doves were seen by the writer and Mr. D. L. McIntosh on a sandy track near Dryandra. The field description recorded in the notebook was "red ring around eye, spots on forward half of wing, light blue-grey breast and neck."

—J. H. CALABY, Canberra.

Black Bream near Bridgetown.—The Black Bream (*Acanthopagrus butcheri*) is a common fish in the lower reaches of rivers in the South-West but there appears to be little on record of the extent of its penetration upstream. On October 26, 1954, about 10 p.m., a very large specimen was caught in the Blackwood River, just on the Boyup Brook side of the Bridgetown Road Board boundary. The approximate length of the Blackwood River from its mouth at Augusta to Bridgetown would be about 130 miles, without taking into account the minor windings (difficult to measure on the 10 miles to the inch map I used). Thus the actual distance would be very much more than this.

The fish measured 27.5 cm. to the caudal fork. After being filleted it was sent to Perth to Dr. D. L. Serventy for confirmation of the identification.

—S. R. WHITE, Floreat Park.

An Observation on the Drinking of *Trachysaurus rugosus*.—While working at the Biological Research Station on Rottnest I. early this year, the writer witnessed a rather unusual phenomenon with regard to the water balance physiology of the Bob-tailed

Lizard, *Trachysaurus rugosus* (Gray). Driving at 7.30 p.m. on January 22 from the Research Station to the settlement after a heavy shower of rain, I collected eight specimens of this skink in or beside puddles formed on the bitumen road. They appeared to be absorbing large quantities of water because each specimen, when held upside down, released a copious amount of fluid from its mouth. This fluid was partly liquid and partly in the form of a slimy jelly. The rainfall records (kindly supplied by the lighthouse-keeper, Mr. Hollings) showed later that 25 points of rain had fallen that night and 5 points the day before. Apart from a negligible 3 points on December 29, 1957, this was the first recorded rain which had fallen since October 20 and 21, when 24 and 19 points respectively were recorded. This means that the lizards were actively hydrating themselves after a dry period of just over 13 weeks (93 days). The majority of the specimens were changing their skins or showed evidence of just having lost their old ones.

—R. M. SADLEIR, Zoology Department, University of Western Australia.

Record of a Sailfish in Western Australian Waters.—Whitley (*Aust. Mus. Mag.*, 11 (12), 1955: 377-383) lists in chronological order the record of sailfishes (*Istiophorus ludibundus*) taken in Australian waters. Altogether 19 occurrences are mentioned, five being from Western Australia. All are in north-western waters, but the localities of only two (90 Mile Beach, near Broome, and Sharks Bay) are precisely known. A further record is now added, making the sixth for Western Australia.

This specimen was caught by Mr. R. Zalan in September, 1957, off the State ship *Dulverton* while it was at anchor off Point Samson. When the ship reached Fremantle I inspected the fish and identified it as the sailfish (*Istiophorus ludibundus*). This identification was later verified by Mr. G. P. Whitley, from a photograph and information forwarded to him.

I took the following particulars of the fish, the measurements being in inches:—Total length, 93.5; head length, 27.0; greatest height of body, 11.0; length of pelvic fin, 21.2; length of pectoral fin, 11.7; length of upper jaw, 21.0; length of lower jaw, 10.5; height of sail at anterior end, 15.0. Dorsal fin count, 48 + 8. Anal fin count, 13 + 7.

Although it was not possible to obtain an accurate weight of the fish, it was estimated to be between 70 and 80 lb.

—B. K. BOWEN, Fisheries Department, Perth.

Recent Observations on the Naretha Parrot.—On Oct. 4, 1956, the writer made a trip between Zanthus and Naretha with Dr. A. R. Main, Dr. Frances Benedict and Mr. R. D. Royce. A total of about 35 Naretha Parrots (*Psephotus haematogaster narethae*) were seen between Naretha and a point 20 miles west of here. No birds were seen west of this point. The parrots were in pairs or larger groups of up to 8 birds. They were mostly feeding on the ground among the dry herbage, and a few were perched in trees.